

Travel Alert



For travel information, call 888-407-4747.
Internet Address: <http://travel.state.gov>

United States Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
Washington, DC 20520

ARGENTINA

July 14, 2009

The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Argentina of the health risks associated with the World Health Organization (WHO)-declared 2009-H1N1 influenza pandemic, which has resulted in illness in numerous countries. The current outbreak in Argentina has caused federal, provincial, and municipal authorities to announce several measures to prevent the illness from spreading. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that Americans at high risk for complications of influenza and considering travel to areas affected by 2009-H1N1 influenza, such as Argentina, discuss their travel plans with their doctor. Together, they should look carefully at the 2009-H1N1 flu situation at their destination including available health-care options in the area. They should discuss their specific health situations and possible increased risk of traveling to the area affected by 2009-H1N1 flu. This Travel Alert expires on September 14, 2009.

The Government of Argentina has announced a US\$263 million effort to take action against the influenza outbreak. All of Argentina's 23 districts and the city of Buenos Aires have extended school vacations, some by as long as a month. Twelve of Argentina's districts, including the Province of Buenos Aires and the city of Buenos Aires, have declared administrative health emergencies. Throughout the country, authorities advise against attending events involving large gatherings of people. The media is issuing public health advice on a continuing basis. The federal government is updating measures on a daily basis and has not ruled out more restrictive actions.

As of July 6, the Ministry of Health had reported 2,485 confirmed cases of 2009-H1N1, including 60 deaths. These figures are updated daily. Currently, there is insufficient international scientific data about the course of the pandemic to determine the highest risk groups for complications of novel influenza A (2009-H1N1) virus infection. According to medical authorities, the same age and risk groups who are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications should also be considered at higher risk for 2009-H1N1 influenza complications.

Groups at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications include:

Children less than 5 years old;

Persons aged 65 years or older;

Children and adolescents (less than 18 years) who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and who might be at risk for experiencing Reye's Syndrome after influenza virus infection;

Pregnant women;

Adults and children who have chronic pulmonary, cardiovascular, hepatic, hematological, neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic disorders;

Adults and children who have immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by HIV);

Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

Not all respiratory illnesses are 2009-H1N1 influenza, but may be seasonal influenza or another illness. Specific questions or concerns about influenza or specific high-risk conditions should be directed to a medical professional.

For additional information please consult the Department of State information on 2009-H1N1 Flu, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website or the World Health Organization Website for information on how to avoid contracting the virus and how to treat it if infected. U.S. citizens also may call the Office of Overseas Citizens Services in the U.S. for the latest travel information. The Office of Overseas Citizens Services can be reached from 8:00 am – 8:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time, M-F, at 1-888-407-4747, or if calling from outside the U.S., at (202)-501-4444. For any emergencies involving American citizens, please contact the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit of the U.S. Embassy's Consular Section, located at 4300 Avenida Colombia, 1425 Buenos Aires; telephone +54-11-5777-4354; after hours emergency telephone +54-11-5777-4873; ACS unit fax +54-11-5777-4293; e-mail BuenosAires-ACS@state.gov; web page.

Americans living or traveling in Argentina are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy through the State Department's travel registration Website, so that they can obtain updated information on travel and security within Argentina. Americans without internet access may register directly with the U.S. Embassy.